

In the Claims

1. (Original) A handle assembly for unlatching a door latch to open a door of a motor vehicle, said handle assembly comprising:

a housing secured to the door and defining a well;

a handle pivotally secured to said housing, said handle bidirectionally movable from a rest position into and out of said well;

a bell crank pivotally mounted to said housing and operatively engaged with said handle; and

a release lever pivotally mounted to said housing and selectively coupled to said bell crank, said release lever operatively connected to the door latch such that movement of said handle in either direction from its rest position pivots said bell crank and said release lever together relative to said housing to open the door.

2. (Original) A handle assembly as set forth in claim 1 wherein said handle includes at least one arm for engaging said bell crank to pivot said bell crank upon movement of said handle in either direction from its rest position.

3. (Original) A handle assembly as set forth in claim 2 including a guide pin interconnecting said bell crank and said release lever to pivot said release lever as said bell crank is pivoted by said handle.

4. (Original) A handle assembly as set forth in claim 3 wherein said bell crank includes a bell crank aperture having a detent for retaining said guide pin in a nesting position coupling said bell crank to said release lever.

5. (Original) A handle assembly as set forth in claim 4 including a link extending between said release lever and the door latch wherein pivoting of said release lever pulls said link to unlatch the door latch.

6. (Original) A handle assembly as set forth in claim 5 wherein said housing includes a base plate fixedly secured to the door, said bell crank and said release lever pivotally mounted to said base plate along an outboard surface thereof.

7. (Original) A handle assembly as set forth in claim 6 wherein said base plate includes access apertures providing access for said pair of arms to engage said bell crank.

8. (Original) A handle assembly as set forth in claim 7 wherein said bell crank includes a pair of oppositely facing tabs, each engaging one of said pair of arms.

9. (Original) A handle assembly as set forth in claim 8 wherein each of said pair of oppositely facing tabs includes a bumper secured thereto.

10. (Original) A handle assembly as set forth in claim 9 including a locking lever pivotally mounted to said base plate for moving said guide pin over said detent allowing said bell crank to move relative to said release lever such that the door latch remains latched upon movement of said handle in either direction from its rest position.

11. (Original) A handle assembly as set forth in claim 10 wherein said locking lever includes a guide slot extending between upper and lower ends for receiving said guide pin and allowing said guide pin to move therebetween when said guide pin retained by said detent and said bell crank is pivoted by movement of said handle out of its rest position.

12. (Original) A handle assembly as set forth in claim 13 including an interlock mechanism fixedly secured to the door for selectively moving said locking lever to move said guide pin over said detent to prevent movement of said handle to unlatch the door.

13. (Currently Amended) A handle assembly for unlatching a door latch to open a door of a motor vehicle, said handle assembly comprising:

a housing secured to the door and defining a well;

a handle pivotally secured to said housing, said handle ~~bidirectionally~~ movable in a first direction from a rest position to a first actuating position located in said well, and movable in a second direction from said rest position to a second actuating position located out of said well ~~into and out of said well~~ ;

a bell crank pivotally mounted to said housing and operatively engaged with said handle;

a release lever pivotally mounted to said housing and operatively connected between said bell crank and the door latch; and

a locking lever pivotally mounted to said housing ~~for decoupling said bell crank from said release lever such that the door latch remains latched upon movement of said handle in either direction from its rest position~~ and movable between a lock and an unlock position; and

wherein moving said locking lever to said lock position decouples said bell crank from said release lever such that the door latch remains latched upon movement of said handle into one of said first and second actuating positions, and moving said locking lever to said unlock position couples said bell crank to said release lever such that the door latch releases upon movement of said handle into one of said first and second actuating positions.

14. (Currently Amended) A handle assembly as set forth in claim 13 including an interlock mechanism having a bezel fixedly secured to the door and operable to move

said locking lever between said lock position and said unlock position selectively disengaging said release lever from said bell crank for preventing movement of said handle out of its rest position from unlatching the door latch.

15. (Currently Amended) A handle assembly as set forth in claim 14 wherein said interlock mechanism includes an interlock bell crank pivotally secured to said bezel and operatively connected to said locking lever for pivoting said locking lever between said lock and unlock positions ~~to disengage said release lever from said bell crank.~~

16. (Original) A handle assembly as set forth in claim 15 wherein said interlock mechanism includes a rod extending between said interlock bell crank and said locking lever wherein pivoting of said interlock bell crank pulls said rod to pivot said locking lever.

17. (Original) A handle assembly as set forth in claim 16 including a guide pin interconnecting said bell crank and said release lever to pivot said release lever as said bell crank is pivoted by said handle.

18. (Original) A handle assembly as set forth in claim 17 wherein said bell crank includes a bell crank aperture defining a detent for retaining said guide pin in a nesting position coupling said bell crank to said release lever.

19. (Original) A handle assembly as set forth in claim 18 including a link extending between said release lever and the door latch wherein pivoting of said release lever pulls said link to open the door.

20. (Original) A handle assembly as set forth in claim 19 wherein said housing includes a base plate fixedly secured to the door and said housing.

21. (Original) A handle assembly as set forth in claim 20 wherein said handle includes at least one arm engaging said bell crank to pivot said bell crank upon movement of said handle in either direction.

22. (Original) A handle assembly as set forth in claim 21 wherein said base plate includes access apertures providing access for said pair of arms to engage said bell crank.

23. (Original) A handle assembly as set forth in claim 22 wherein said bell crank includes a pair of oppositely facing tabs, each engaging one of said pair of arms.

24. (Currently Amended) A handle assembly for unlatching a door latch to open a door of a motor vehicle, said handle assembly comprising:

a housing including a base plate fixedly secured to the door and defining a well, said base plate having an outboard surface abutting the door;

a handle pivotally secured to said housing, said handle ~~bidirectionally~~ movable in a first direction from a rest position to a first actuating position located in said well, and movable in a second direction from said rest position to a second actuating position located out of said well ~~into and out of said well~~ ;

a bell crank pivotally mounted to said base plate along said outboard surface thereof and operatively engaged with said handle;

a release lever pivotally mounted to said base plate along said outboard surface thereof and operatively connected to the door latch; and

a locking lever pivotally mounted to said housing ~~for decoupling said bell crank from said release lever such that the door latch remains latched upon movement of said handle in either direction from its rest position~~ and movable between a lock and an unlock position; and

wherein moving said locking lever to said lock position decouples said bell crank from said release lever such that the door latch remains latched upon movement of said

handle into one of said first and second actuating positions, and moving said locking lever to said unlock position couples said bell crank to said release lever such that the door latch releases upon movement of said handle into one of said first and second actuating positions.

25. (Original) A handle assembly as set forth in claim 24 wherein said handle includes at least one arm for engaging said bell crank to pivot said bell crank upon movement of said handle in either direction from its rest position.

26. (Original) A handle assembly as set forth in claim 25 including a guide pin interconnecting said bell crank and said release lever to pivot said release lever as said bell crank is pivoted by said handle.

27. (Original) A handle assembly as set forth in claim 26 wherein said bell crank includes a bell crank aperture defining a detent for retaining said guide pin in a nesting position coupling said bell crank to said release lever.

28. (Original) A handle assembly as set forth in claim 27 including a link extending between said release lever and the door latch wherein pivoting of said release lever pulls said link to unlatch the door latch.

29. (Original) A handle assembly as set forth in claim 28 wherein said base plate includes access apertures providing access for said pair of arms to engage said bell crank.

30. (Original) A handle assembly as set forth in claim 29 wherein said bell crank includes a pair of oppositely facing tabs, each engaging one of said pair of arms.